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Come to study in our city: examples of projects undertaken by local authorities and higher education institutions to promote Polish cities on foreign education markets

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ABSTRACT

Processes of globalisation and internationalization of higher education are for cities a factor of social-economic development. Incoming foreign students create an international academic atmosphere and enrich local social life. Municipal authorities see in this a valuable resource and a chance for promotion abroad, which will bring prestige to the city and in the long term, an opportunity to have contacts which could revive local economy. Therefore they undertake close cooperation with higher education institutions in their area in order to create the brand of the city as an academic centre. In Poland such cooperation usually has the form of partnership projects run under the name of “study in”. The article presents the aims and scope of “study in” projects run at the local level by municipal authorities and higher education institutions in order to promote the city and its educational offer among foreign students. As a case study, the undertakings initiated in Warsaw, Krakow, Wroclaw and Poznan were described. Preliminary research of strategic documents, reports and archive materials was done, which allowed to show the directions of undertaken promotional and investment actions in these cities. Running “study in” projects in Poland as a result contributes to the improvement of the offer of higher education institutions and strengthens the positive image of the cities as modern, dynamically developing places which are attractive to study, live in and undertake professional activity. Accepting the mutual strategy of marketing communication allows reducing the costs and increasing the complementary character of the offer of the city for foreign students

Keywords: place marketing; academic marketing; internationalization of higher education; educational offer; foreign students; city promotion; “study in” projects; Poland

1. INTRODUCTION

Contemporary cities function in complex and dynamically changing economic, social and cultural environment. Processes of globalisation are extremely significant and above all the increased mobility of capital, information and people. Because of that, cities more and more often compete with each other to attract factors most attractive from the point of view of their development. Such factors include the human capital, which is personified in a group of creative and highly qualified people, whose knowledge and skills are needed. The basis for the competitive advantage of an urban agglomeration in this context are higher education institutions as they are the centres of creativity and make space for creative, open, visionary people [11,17]. They gather talented specialists, attract students and foreigners, who are representatives of the creative class [7]. They create the climate which supports innovativeness. Initiatives which are born in the academic environment enliven local social and cultural life, help build city's identity, emphasise its modernity and dynamics.

Globalisation is a factor which affects many aspects of today's world, also higher education institutions. In this field the phenomena of internationalization, which is the result of increasing international mobility of students, is especially important [2,27]. More and more frequently young people choose universities outside their countries of origin, deciding to do all or part of their studies abroad [24,25]. This decision is facilitated thanks to various student exchange programmes [5], more and more lectures in English [1], and standardizing higher education systems, which in Europe is the result of implementing the Bologna Process [26]. The ability to attract foreign students is now not only the proof of school's attractiveness but also influences its position in rankings and its significance in the scientific environment [20, 28]. As a result, higher education institutions are more and more subject to processes of competitiveness on the global education market.

It is estimated that on a global scale more than 4.5 million students study outside their country [22]. It is predicted that this number will have doubled by 2020. More than a half of international students come from Asia, where citizens of China, India and South Korea are predominant. The majority of foreign students come to OECD countries, including the USA, Australia, the UK, Germany and France [22]. More than a half of all foreign students in the world come to the countries mentioned above. Despite spectacular growth, in Poland there are not only much fewer foreign students than in the most developed countries of the West or in China, but also fewer than in the neighbouring countries such as the Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia or even Bulgaria [9]. Poland is, besides Croatia, the least internationalised country of the EU and one of the least internationalised OECD countries.

For many years the concept of marketing was just a theoretical issue for higher education institutions in Poland. However, the population decline, increase in mobility, a constantly growing number of non-state higher education institutions and market orientation introduced competitiveness into the world of higher education institutions, making them undertake promotional activities [4, 16]. Nowadays in the world no one wonders any more whether marketing should be used by scientific institutions such as universities or academies [6, 20]. Qualified staff try to adapt the existing marketing tools to the specificity of higher education institutions to build and strengthen their position on the education market [10]. The brand associated with academic products has become the indicator of the value of higher education institutions because a strong brand means prestige and a good image in the

international arena [4,13]. Competitive processes make higher education institutions invest more and more in professional staff dealing with promotion, image and internal and external communication.

Apart from choosing a higher education institution and subject, young people take into account in which city they will be studying. When choosing a place to study, students expect a unique atmosphere to be able to develop personally, good living conditions and attractive forms of spending their free time [3,12,21]. This requires from higher education institutions a more comprehensive look at the product of academic marketing, in symbiosis with the city marketing. It is a new kind of a challenge for higher education institutions because in fact they compete with schools from other cities [10,23]. This demands a gradual change from thinking only in the categories of the offer of one university into thinking of the combined offer of all higher education institutions in a given area. Given comparable, equally beneficial offers of two universities from two different cities, a potential student will choose this city whose comprehensive offer is more attractive to him/her [18]. Therefore competitiveness between cities is more and more visible and cities have started to strongly support higher education institutions in their fight for foreign students.

The processes mentioned above have become an important starting point for the reflection about close cooperation of higher education institutions with cities in which they have their seat. A phenomenon observed in recent years is combining activities of a group of higher education institutions with the potential of the city and appearing on a wider forum as an academic centre [6, 23]. The process of conscious promotion of an academic centre is not only the response to the specific need of the market but also a search for clients of specific needs, expectations and predispositions [15]. The assumed benefit of such an approach is supporting the image of a higher education institution with the brand of the city, which as a result translates into strengthening the image of the city with the brand of the institution [14,23]. It seems that the educational offer, besides its cultural and tourist offer, will be in the future of key significance for building the position of the city on foreign markets. For this reason municipal authorities in cooperation with higher education institutions initiate partnership projects aimed at encouraging young people to study in their city [6, 28]. These projects on the one hand are to create a comprehensive academic product and on the other build strong relations between the image of this product and the image of the city.

The aim of the article was to describe and define the uniqueness of partnership projects done at the local level by higher education institutions and municipal authorities to promote the city and its educational offer among foreign students. As a case study an example of four projects under the name of “study in” was presented. They were initiated in the biggest academic cities in Poland: Warsaw, Krakow, Wroclaw and Poznan, where there were more than 100,000 students studying in 2015. The area of the research was dictated by the significance of these urban agglomerations as scientific centres in the international arena, and also contemporary processes of internationalization of education programmes which are happening. To fulfil the aim of the work, the author did preliminary research of statutes, regulations and reports from the implementation of the projects, as well as strategic and planning documents of the cities. The time frame for the research was 2005-2015, which is connected with the beginning of “Study in Poland” programme and other similar promotional campaigns run by cities and higher education institutions in this country. It made it possible to show the directions of activities undertaken within the “study in” projects and define the way of creating a positive image of Polish academic cities on international education markets. To

show the problems in a better way, in the last part of the article similar projects undertaken in the biggest academic cities were described, namely “Study in Warsaw”, “Study in Krakow”, “Study in Wroclaw” and “Study in Poznan”. These projects were offers which were presented abroad as a result of conscious and purposefully oriented activity of partners doing promotional activities.

2. THE BIGGEST ACADEMIC CENTRES IN POLAND

Poland belongs to the European countries with the longest academic traditions. The oldest university in Poland is the Jagiellonian University, founded in 1364 on the initiative of the Polish king Casimir III the Great. It was the second higher education institution in Central Europe, after Charles University in Prague (1348). In the next centuries subsequent scientific centres came into existence, including the University of Wroclaw (1702), the University of Warsaw (1816), the Warsaw School of Economics (1906) and Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznan (1919). Due to historical and geopolitical conditions some higher education institutions functioned outside the contemporary Polish borders.

According to the data of Central Statistical Office (Główny Urząd Statystyczny - GUS), in 2015 there were 415 higher education institutions with over 1.4 million students altogether [8]. This number is comprised of 19 universities, 23 technical colleges, 7 agricultural colleges, 67 colleges of economics, 14 pedagogical colleges, 9 medical universities, 2 naval colleges, 6 physical education colleges, 22 artistic colleges, 15 theological colleges and others [8]. The majority of people studied at universities (421,800 students), technical colleges and technical academies (301,400) and state vocational colleges (237,700).

Table 1. The biggest academic centres in Poland in 2015
(taking into consideration the number of students).

No.	Academic centre (city)	Number of permanent residents [thous.]	Number of students [thous.]		Number of graduates [thous.]	Number of higher education institutions**	
			total	from abroad*		total	state ones
1.	Białystok	296.0	30.3	1.1	9.2	10	3
2.	Bydgoszcz	355.6	32.9	0.8	9.5	7	3
3.	Częstochowa	228.2	15.3	0.3	5.3	6	2
4.	Gdańsk	462.2	75.4	1.5	18.8	15	6
5.	Gdynia	247.5	12.9	0.2	3.4	5	2
6.	Gliwice	183.4	23.9	0.5	7.0	2	1
7.	Katowice	299.9	53.8	2.6	14.5	14	6
8.	Kielce	198.0	25.1	0.2	8.7	9	2

9.	Krakow	761.1	160.8	5.8	44.9	21	10
10.	Lublin	340.7	67.3	4.5	19.2	9	5
11.	Lodz	701.0	76.3	2.7	19.8	21	6
12.	Olsztyn	173.4	25.8	0.3	8.0	4	1
13.	Opole	118.9	22.6	1.0	7.6	4	3
14.	Poznan	542.3	116.4	3.5	32.0	24	8
15.	Rzeszow	185.9	43.8	2.5	14.9	4	2
16.	Szczecin	405.7	39.4	1.4	2.0	3	5
17.	Torun	202.7	25.1	0.5	58.9	6	1
18.	Warszawa	1 744.3	243.3	10.8	30.8	76	15
19.	Wroclaw	635.8	120.0	3.7	3.5	25	8
20.	Zielona Gora	138.7	12.1	0.3	9.2	10	1

*the number includes foreign students in the academic year of 2014/2015 **the number does not include branches and departments outside the city, teaching centres and other organisational units undertaking teaching and scientific-research activity outside the city with the seat of the college.

Source: own elaboration based on the data of Local Data Bank of Central Statistical Office and statistical data published by local government agencies.

Nowadays there are four academic centres in Poland with the number of students higher than 100,000 people: Warsaw, Krakow, Wroclaw and Poznan (Table 1), with Warsaw being the most popular among students. There are 16 academic centres educating between 10,000 and 100,000 people, the biggest of which are Lodz, Gdansk, Lublin, Katowice, and then: Rzeszow, Szczecin, Bydgoszcz, Bialystok, Olsztyn, Torun, Kielce, Gliwice, Opole, Czestochowa, Gdynia and Zielona Góra [8]. These cities are the seats of the state universities and technical colleges which have the longest academic traditions in Poland. Students make up a significant group of city inhabitants, especially in big urban agglomerations such as Warsaw, Krakow or Wroclaw or cities typically academic such as, for instance, Lublin. Moreover, in recent years there has been a dynamic increase in the number of foreign students. It is connected with the widening of the educational offer of higher education institutions which fight for students from other countries consistently, for example by introducing subjects in foreign languages and participating in international programmes of academic exchange.

3. INTERNATIONALIZATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN POLAND IN THE CONTEXT OF DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGES

Since 2005 higher education institutions in Poland have been wrestling with the population decline which systematically makes the number of students lower. Within ten years, that is between the academic year of 2005/2006 and 2015/2016, the number of students

of higher education institutions in Poland dropped by 548,700 people, which is about 30% of the number of students from the academic year of 2005/2006 [8]. It is estimated that this tendency will also continue in the next years. It is believed that by 2020 Poland will have experienced the biggest decrease in the number of people aged between 19 and 24 among all the OECD countries [22].

The decrease is estimated at about 25-30% in comparison with the number of students from 2013 [19]. The number of students in this country will have decreased by 1 million. The described changes observed at the level of higher education institutions are accompanied with problems on the job market - a decreasing number of working people to one pensioner. It stems from the structure of the population of Poland, unfavourable demographic changes and also longer life expectancy of Polish people [27]. As a result of these processes many Polish higher education institutions might be closed. In order not to let this situation happen, promotion of Polish higher education institutions abroad has become necessary.

Contemporary demographic processes in Poland have had an influence on the change of perception of foreigners coming to this country to study. In recent years they have been thought of in a strategic way, as a resource which can render a service of decreasing negative effects of demographic processes [19]. This type of perception of foreign students has its reflection in various government documents which show the need to attract foreign students to Poland and encourage them to stay in Poland after they finish their studies. In this context it is worth emphasising that public statistics show that the number of foreigners coming to Poland to study is constantly increasing.

Over the academic years of 2005/2006 and 2015/2016 the number of foreign students in Poland increased fivefold (from 10,100 to 57,100) [9]. What is more, significant dynamics of this phenomenon can be observed. For instance, in the academic year of 2015/2016 there was an increase of 23% (about 10,000 people) in the number of foreign students in comparison with the year before.

The majority of people came to Polish higher education institutions from Ukraine (30,600) and Belarus (4,600). Fewer people came from Norway (1,600), Spain (1,400), Sweden (1,300), Turkey (1,200), the Czech Republic (1,100), Russia (1,000) and Germany (1,000). It is worth emphasising that over 83% of all foreign students came from European countries. Contrary to global trends on the education market, in Poland there are few students from Asia, North America and Africa [9]. In total, foreign students made for 4.1% of all students, which is a low value of an internationalization indicator of higher education in comparison with other OECD countries.

Internationalization of studies is one of the main development factors of higher education not only in Poland but also around the world. Developed countries undertake various activities in order to encourage the most talented young people from all over the world to come to study, and the factor of internationalization has become one of the main indicators of the level of country's development.

Although higher education in Poland is not the responsibility of local administration, authorities of individual cities, together with the local academic environment and supporting them non-governmental organisations, undertake shared activities aimed at increasing competitiveness of higher education institutions and promotion of their educational offer abroad. Such initiatives usually take a form of partnership projects called "study in", and are done in the biggest academic centres.

4. THE MAIN AIMS AND SCOPE OF “STUDY IN” PARTNERSHIP PROJECTS RUN IN POLISH CITIES

Higher education institutions constitute today one of the key elements of creating the image and positioning of the cities on foreign markets. It does not mean one particular university but the whole academic environment with its characteristic traits such as innovativeness, creativity, dynamics or international relations [6,14]. For this reason municipal authorities in Polish cities more and more often initiate projects aiming at encouraging young people to study in local higher education institutions. Students, in particular coming from other countries, are for cities and higher education institutions a valuable resource not only because of the population decline in Poland and connected with it direct benefits including profits from the tuition fee or being able to give work to lecturers. Foreigners enrich local student life and create an international academic atmosphere. They stimulate cafe and club life in the city and at the same time are highly qualified human capital, valuable for the development of local companies. It affects the image of the city as a place to study and educate, place which is modern, smart, dynamic and open to diversity and multiculturalism. These are the traits which attract the attention of potential visitors, tourists and investors. In this context, it is equally important that foreign students are the ambassadors of Polish cities in the countries of their origin.

Taking into consideration benefits that are connected with internationalization of higher education institutions, municipal authorities undertake cooperation with higher education institutions in partnership projects called “study in”. In Poland these are mainly non-commercial initiatives whose main aim is to promote the educational offer of higher education institutions among foreign students and support their integration and cultural adaptation after their arrival in the city. In 2015 such projects were run in all urban agglomerations with more than 250,000 inhabitants. The most active actions were undertaken in academic centres where there were more than 50,000 students. These were Warsaw, Krakow, Wroclaw, Poznan, Lodz, Gdansk, Lublin and Katowice (Table 2). It should be emphasised that in recent years similar projects have been initiated in smaller cities as well. We can use the example of Bialystok where Bialystok Centre for the Support of Students from Eastern Europe has been functioning since 2014. This institution offers comprehensive and free of charge help with visa formalities and other procedures (e.g. accommodation, insurance, health care) necessary to officially approve of the stay of non-European citizens who are interested in undertaking studies in this city.

The range of tasks connected with the “study in” projects was diverse in different cities in Poland. This resulted from accepted at the local level strategic plans, regulations and agreements between the partners of the projects. Among the most frequently named tasks there were:

- a) strengthening international attractiveness and recognition of the city as a European centre of science and education,
- b) increasing the number of foreign students in local higher education institutions by widening the educational offer in English, developing international cooperation, participation in international programmes of academic exchange, etc.,
- c) promoting abroad the city and higher education institutions functioning in it by:

- actively participating in international education fairs and organising individual presentations of higher education institutions in other cities,
 - running a website containing information about higher education institutions functioning in the city, addressed to foreign university candidates,
 - tightening cooperation with the local media (press, magazines, radio, TV, internet portals etc.) and using popular social media (Facebook, Google+, VKontakte etc.),
 - publishing every year catalogues, brochures and other promotional materials presenting the educational offer available to foreigners interested in studying in the city,
 - opening field information offices and promoting partners of the agreement during study tours abroad,
- d) initiating specialist trainings increasing the competences of the workers of higher education institutions responsible for dealing with foreign students,
- e) organising in the city international conferences concerning education which could be the forum for an exchange of national and international experiences concerning internationalization of studies,
- f) creating conditions increasing the attractiveness of the city as the place of study for foreign people by for example introducing multicultural education and international aspects into the programmes of study.



Depending on the city, “study in” projects were often enriched with additional programme solutions which were directed both at foreign students and university workers and the municipal office.




The preliminary research of strategic plans and reports from the implementation of the “study in” projects allowed to differentiate between two groups varying in organisation and directions of undertaken actions. The first group included projects with a form of complex educational programmes, which offered to students many services and facilities. These were usually special scholarships for the most talented students, subsidising their accommodation in dormitories, information-consultation points, integrating trips and free language courses, as well as trainings, traineeships and apprenticeships. The costs of educating people who got into this projects were borne by the university. Such initiatives were undertaken for example in Lublin, Lodz, Poznan and Wroclaw.

The other group of the projects was less diverse and concentrated mainly on promotional activities. These included participation in international education fairs, organisation of study tours, and also sponsored articles and adverts in the national and international media. In the undertaken actions municipal authorities concentrated on presenting the city as attractive not only to study but also to settle down and pursue professional career. In this group of projects, actions to financially and organisationally support foreign students after their arrival were less often implemented.

This applied to the academic centres such as Gdansk, Katowice, Krakow and Warsaw. A popular solution implemented in both groups were special discount cards, thanks to which students could get discounts in museums, restaurants, theatres, cinemas, clubs and local companies offering various services.

Table 2. Description of “study in” partnership projects in selected academic centres in Poland in 2015.

City (official webpage of the project)	Logo of the project	Year of project start	Number of partner HEIs	Total number of degree programmes				Support programmes for students								Official project website				
				1st cycle	2nd cycle	Single cycle	In English	S	A	C	D	I	T	L	B	Language version	Search engine of degree programmes	Practical information	Student events calendar	Social media
Gdansk (study-gdansk.com)		2014	15 (6 public, 9 non-public)	169	117	10	26	•		•				•	•	EN, PL, RU	+	+		FB, G+, TT, YT, FS, PT
Katowice (studyinsilesia.pl)		2010	9 (9 public)	202	184	11	14	•					•	•		PL, EN		+	+	FB
Krakow (study-krakow.com)		2008	10 (9 public, 1 non-public)	389	341	30	57	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	CN, DE, EN, ES, RU, TR, UA	+	+	+	FB, G+, TT
Lublin (study.lublin.eu)		2011	9 (5 public, 4 non-public)	210	133	15	40	•		•			•	•		EN, PL, RU, UA	+	+		FB, VK
Lodz (mlodziwlodzi.pl)		2008	5 (5 public)	301	276	11	47	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	EN, PL		+	+	FB, G+, YT

Poznan (study.in.poznan.pl)		2013 (2005)	14 (8 public, 6 non-public)	208	195	8	42	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	EN, PL	+	+	+	FB, TT, YT, FS, PT
Warszawa (study.in.warsaw.pl)		2008	18 (13 public, 5 non-public)	447	425	24	78	•		•		•	•	•	•	EN, ES, PL, PT, RU, UA	+	+		FB, TT, YT
Wroclaw (study-in-wroclaw.pl)		2006	6 (4 public, 2 non-public)	186	161	5	46	•	•	•				•	•	EN, PL, RU, UA	+	+		FB, VK

Explanations: S – scholarship programmes, A – accommodation programmes, C – customer care including e.g. social assistance, cultural adaptation, integration, and psychosocial support programmes for students, D – discount cards for students, I – internship programmes, T – free training/workshops for students, L – intensive Polish language courses, B – business start-up support programmes for graduate students; Language versions: CN – Chinese, DE – German, EN – English, ES – Spanish, PL – Polish, PT – Portuguese, RU – Russian, TR – Turkish, UA – Ukrainian; Social media: FB – Facebook, G+ – Google+, VK – VKontakte, TT – Twitter, YT – YouTube, FS – Foursquare, PT – Pinterest

Source: own elaboration based on a query of reports from the implementation of the “study in” projects and strategic documents of the cities.

Promotional activities done within the “study in” projects differed depending on the city and they can be divided into active and passive forms. There were few of the active ones between 2005 and 2015, but they brought the greatest benefits to their initiators. The distribution of information about the educational offer was in this case based on new interactive channels of communication. Active forms usually took the shape of field marketing and to some degree in their character were close to marketing events, because they assumed getting into direct contact with young people in their place of residence. There were not only mass events, but also smaller undertakings (e.g. roadshows, happenings, concerts, study tours) and not always in the open air (e.g. conferences, presentations in high schools and higher education institutions, integrating events). Marketing events made it possible to effectively build and strengthen emotional bonds with the promoted brand of the city by creating real experiences for the recipients. However, in the researched period more cities chose the passive forms of promotion using traditional channels of information distribution. It resulted from the ease of implementation, relatively lower costs and wider scope of impact on the target groups of recipients. Among most frequently undertaken passive actions we can name: organising open days of the higher education institutions, participation in education

fairs, distribution of promotional materials and adverts in the local media supported with billboards.

In the researched academic centres in Poland a frequently undertaken activity in “study in” projects was creating and running websites. They were mainly aimed at young people in Poland and abroad looking for an educational offer in the cities. The websites were supposed to become the primary source of information concerning the possibility of studying in a given city and the accommodation conditions, food, transport and costs of stay. In most cases they included a search engine to search for courses and higher education institutions. These search engines were created as categories that the user ticks to make their expectation towards the educational offer clearer. What is important, the websites were made available in various language versions, most frequently in English, Ukrainian and Russian. Most of them were made available on mobile devices to give access to the most important content at any time and any place.

The primary sources of financing the activities undertaken within the “study in” projects were membership fees. The information about the amount and type of fee collection was given in statutes or regulations of associations forming the partners of the project. Most frequently these were resources coming from the city budget and the budget of higher education institutions. Functioning of the projects was also dependent on social work of members and volunteers, who did statute activities for free. Donations from the government administration, voivodeship offices and EU funds were of great significance for the fulfilment of some undertakings, especially those with a national or international range. The most rarely seen form of financing were private donations, fundraising and sponsoring.

Higher education institutions and municipal authorities cooperating with them, apart from their own projects run at the local level, were very keen to join undertakings initiated at the regional and national level. It concerned especially smaller academic centres with fewer than 100,000 students. The examples of regional projects were “Study in Pomerania” (Pomerania voivodeship), “Study in Silesia” (Silesia voivodeship) and “Study in Lesser Poland” (Lesser Poland voivodeship), which had an open character and could be joined by higher education institutions functioning in the area of the voivodeships. National programmes were very popular among higher education institutions in Poland, especially the project “Ready, study, go...” (www.go-poland.pl) done by the Ministry of Science and Higher Education, as well as the promotional campaign “Study in Poland” (www.studyinpoland.pl) run by the Conference of Rectors of Academic Schools in Poland and Education Foundation Perspektywy. The idea of the initiatives was similar to those implemented in urban agglomerations, but their scale of marketing effect was much wider. However, it should be emphasised that constructing one's own project connected with the promotion of the city is more distinctive as far as image is concerned so at the same time seen in a better way by potential recipients.

5. EXAMPLES OF “STUDY IN” PARTNERSHIP PROJECTS IN SELECTED POLISH CITIES

5.1. Study in Warsaw

Warsaw is the biggest academic centre in Poland. According to the data of Central Statistical Office, 243,00 students studied there in 2015. There are more and more foreign

students in the capital of Poland every year. Higher education institutions which can boast the highest number of foreign students in the academic year of 2014/2015 were the University of Warsaw with 1,951 of foreigners, Warsaw University of Technology – 1,178, Warsaw School of Economics – 673, Medical University of Warsaw – 648 and Warsaw University of Life Sciences – 539. In Warsaw we could find mostly young people from Ukraine (about 30% of the total number of foreign students), Belarus (20%) and the Member States of the EU (20%), especially Spain, Sweden, Norway, Lithuania, Germany and France. From outside of Europe, also citizens of Canada, the USA, Turkey, China, Vietnam, Taiwan and Malaysia came to study in Warsaw.

In 2008 a promotional-educational project “Study in Warsaw” was started. It was undertaken together by the Municipality of Warsaw, the conference of the rectors of Warsaw's Higher Education Institutions and Education Foundation Perspektywy. The project is assigned to the education strategy of Warsaw document. As the preamble of the agreement of the project states, it was signed “bearing in mind the necessity of long-term activities promoting Warsaw as a European metropolis, increasing competitiveness of Warsaw's higher education institutions on the international education market and also the need to integrate promotional activities in this field”. The programme based on the idea of creating a consistent image of local higher education institutions, preparing a shared export offer and building the strategy of Warsaw's presence as a European city to study abroad. The project was addressed to young people from other countries, who are potentially interested in studying in Warsaw. The main geographical directions to which the offer was directed were the countries of Eastern Europe, especially Ukraine and Belarus, as well as some Asian countries (in particular China, India, Vietnam, Caucasian countries, Kazakhstan and Turkey) and the countries of the EU. In the period of the implementation of the “Study in Warsaw” project the number of foreign students increased almost threefold, from about 3,500 in the academic year of 2007/2008 to over 10,800 in 2013/2014. Since 2014 the programme has been continued within a wider promotional campaign “Study in Poland”.

The partners of the “Study in Warsaw” project published catalogues and brochures in English, Ukrainian, Russian and Chinese presenting higher education institutions and opportunities to study in Warsaw. A website (www.studyinwarsaw.pl) was started, letting potential foreign students follow the current offer of higher education institutions and educational and cultural proposals of the city. An important element of the undertaken promotional activities was the participation in international education fairs for example in Kiev, Shanghai, participation in Presentations of Warsaw's Higher Education Institutions in Kazakhstan. Additionally, within this project system cooperation between Warsaw and Kiev was organised, directed among others to widen the cooperation in the field of pupil and student exchange, running research projects and co-organisation in Warsaw international conferences sacrificed to internationalization of higher education (e.g. Academic Cooperation Association – ACA, Poland International Education Conference WARSAW 2008).

On the other hand, actions aimed at foreign students were for example creating a one-year School of Polish Language and Culture, organizing integration trips and widening the offer of “After Hours” courses developing students' interests. The city supports foreign students by initiating special municipal program, education and social activities concerning tolerance, or local initiatives like “Open Warsaw” or the participatory budget to which are invited foreign students and other temporary citizens with their ideas of actions. The municipal Program Supporting Entrepreneurship also includes young foreigners. Within

Smolna Centre are organized trainings, lectures concerning start-ups, development of business activities or creativity.

5. 2. Study in Krakow

Krakow is currently second after Warsaw biggest academic centre in Poland as far as the number of students is concerned. In contrast to other urban agglomerations, Krakow can be differentiated by its long history of education system and academic traditions. According to the data of GUS, in 2015 the academic community of Krakow was created by over 160,800 students and 12,000 scientific workers, who together made for 20% of all inhabitants of the city. In recent years higher education institutions in this city had three times more foreign students, from over 2,000 in the academic year of 2007/2008 to almost 6,000 students in 2014/2015. These were in particular citizens of Ukraine (60%), Norway (7%) and Belarus (6%). Foreigners most frequently undertook studies at the Jagiellonian University (1,759 people), Cracow University of Economics (976) and the AGH University of Science and Technology (512), and from non-state schools, the educational offer of Andrzej Frycz Modrzewski Krakow University (1776) was interesting for students. A dynamic increase of the number of students from abroad was possible thanks to the activities undertaken within various urban programmes, among which a special place was taken by the partnership project "Study in Krakow".

The "Study in Krakow" project is an example of a conscious promotional strategy which is to increase the number of people coming to Krakow for educational reasons. The project was initiated in 2008 within the promotion of so called Krakow Academic Centre. Its main aim was to support internationalization of local higher education institutions, including increasing the number of subjects where it is possible to study in foreign languages, animating academic exchange and inviting foreign scientists to lecture in Krakow. Apart from the Municipality of Krakow, 10 Krakow's higher education institutions participated in the project: the AGH University of Science and Technology, the Academy of Music in Krakow, the Academy of Fine Arts in Krakow, the University of Physical Education in Krakow, Andrzej Frycz Modrzewski Krakow University, the Cracow University of Technology, Cracow University of Economics, the Jagiellonian University, the Pedagogical University of Cracow and University of Agriculture in Krakow. It is worth emphasising that the number of partners might increase because the project has an open character.

Initiatives connected with the "Study in Krakow" project can be divided into three categories. First of all, these were all the undertakings to get the students from abroad and promote the brand of the city on the international education market. Local higher education institutions in the years 2008-2015 opened 105 courses in a foreign language, mainly English, and also offered 57 full English cycles of study (BA, MA and PhD), 3 summer schools and 8 intensive Polish courses.

The task included as well participation of the representatives of institutions taking part in the project in trade fairs (e.g. EAIE in Europe, NAFSA in North America) and recruitment ones (Turkey, Ukraine etc.) under the common brand "Study in Krakow". The second category of actions undertaken within the project was connected with the support of foreign students who decided to come to Krakow by helping them adapt in Poland and complete all formalities.

Third of all, the project assumed initiatives aiming at making the stay in Poland attractive, among others support in getting to know Krakow and the region by organising

tourist, cultural and entertainment programmes. A recently introduced discount card “Study in Krakow” was very helpful. It was given to students for free and it offered discounts in local shops and cultural places in this city.

An important element of the project was an extended English website (www.study-krakow.com), which according to their creators was to be the main source of information about the programmes of studies and courses in foreign languages offered by higher education institutions in Krakow. All the information concerning the methods of recruitment, scholarship offer, Polish education system and other aspects connected with studying in Poland was included as well. Thanks to frequent updates it provided current information about interesting cultural and scientific events in Krakow. The website included as well simplified versions in Chinese, Spanish, Russian, German, Turkish and Ukrainian. Within the project there was also a blog and accounts in popular social media, including Facebook, Google+ and Twitter.

Apart from that, in 2012-2013 municipal authorities started a promotional campaign “Krakow to stan umysłu” (“Krakow is a state of mind”), and since 2013 “inKRK! Keep on developing – Postaw na rozwój” initiative has been functioning. Their aim was to promote the image of Krakow as a place where people not only study and have fun but also where it is possible to develop one's professional career. There were four projects within inKRK!: “Business4You inKRK!”, “inKRK!.doc”, “StartUp inKRK!” and “Tra-inKRK!” – they all concentrated on supporting business, among others by running trainings for young people or offering them traineeships and apprenticeships in partner companies.

5. 3. Study in Wrocław

Wrocław is one of the oldest academic cities in Poland and has more than 300 years of university tradition. According to GUS, in 2015 there were 25 higher education institutions there which educated more than 120,000 students. Every year the number of foreign students increases. In the academic year of 2014/2015 about 3,700 foreigners came to study in Wrocław. Wrocław attracts young people from abroad not only with its well-developed scientific background but also a wide and varied cultural and recreational offer. Municipal authorities in Wrocław were the first in Poland to undertake actions concerning promoting an educational offer of local higher education institutions abroad.

In 2006 thanks to the agreement between Wrocław University of Economics, the president of the city and Wrocław Agglomeration Development Agency, a promotional campaign “Now Wrocław” (“Teraz Wrocław”) was started. The main aim of this campaign was to inform young people from Ukraine about the possibility of studying in Wrocław, encourage them to come to this city and make contacts between higher education institutions in Wrocław and the biggest academic centres in Ukraine. In the following years the project “Now Wrocław” was continued also in other countries of Eastern Europe, but since 2013 under a new name and brand “Study in Wrocław”.

The “Study in Wrocław” project had a character of a comprehensive educational programme. It was done together by the municipal authorities and six higher education institutions in Wrocław, including six state ones (the University of Wrocław, Wrocław University of Science and Technology, Wrocław University of Economics, Wrocław University of Environmental and Life Sciences) and two non-state (WSB Universities, the University of Business in Wrocław). The works were coordinated by Wrocław Agglomeration Development Agency.

The activities of the project were mainly directed at simplifying recruitment procedures and lowering the costs of studying for young people coming from the non-EU countries. Partner schools offered special scholarships and free places in full time studies for foreigners. Apart from Ukraine, the project was addressed to the citizens of Belarus, Moldova and Russia and also countries situated in Asia, especially Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. Recruitment commissions functioning within this project at universities took into consideration the level of Polish, the average grade at the school leaving examination and motivation of the candidate to study. People who had a valid Polish Card (Karta Polaka) and people accepted to the university within the project in previous years could not take part in the programme

Since the beginning of the “Study in Wroclaw” project more than 1,000 foreigners from 8 countries have used the educational programme. These people successfully completed the recruitment process, becoming students and graduates of local higher education institutions. The number of foreign students accepted in individual editions of the programme has systematically grown. In the first edition, in the academic year of 2007/08 there were 25 people, but in 2013/2014 there were 210 beneficiaries. These were mainly citizens of Ukraine, Belarus and Kazakhstan. Most frequently they undertook studies at the University of Wroclaw and Wroclaw University of Environmental and Life Sciences, which was connected with the number of free places declared in the project by the institutions. Less popular was the offer of Wroclaw Medical University, Wroclaw University of Economics and Wroclaw University of Science and Technology. More than 60% of the students who took part in the project did not pay any tuition fee. Contrary to the previous projects, the educational programme “Study in Wroclaw” did not include free places for candidates in doctoral studies as well as summer school, intensive language courses and trainings and workshops.

Within the campaign promoting the “Study in Wroclaw” project there was a special website created (www.study-in-wroclaw.pl) in four language versions: Polish, English, Russian and Ukrainian. It contained practical information for people applying to a university and a search engine of subjects available in higher education institutions in Wroclaw. Apart from that, accounts in popular social media were created, where posts about changes in the educational offer and current cultural events in the city were made. An important element of the promotional activities were as well sponsored articles and adverts in the press, on the radio and TV. The partners of the project took active part in education fairs during which there were presentations of young people. An example of that can be International Education Fair “Education Abroad” in Kiev. Every year in September there was a one-month adaptive course during which foreign students improved their Polish and learnt about the Polish history, culture and tradition.

Talking about Wroclaw it is worth mentioning the activity of the Office for the Cooperation with Higher Education Institutions, which functions within the Municipality of Wroclaw. This office coordinates two programmes – “Wroclaw's Graduate” and “Wroclaw's Magnolia”. The first one offers to the student of the last year at the university an opportunity to make use of free courses developing their soft skills, increasing their chances on the job market. The latter has a form of a competition, where the best theses are awarded. Moreover, students studying sciences have a possibility to get Wroclaw's Maths Scholarship awarded by the president of the city. In the academic year of 2014/2015 625 students received these scholarships, worth in total almost 1.7 million PLN.

5. 4. Study in Poznan

Poznan is a significant scientific-research centre in Poland. According to GUS, in 2015 there were 26 higher education institutions in the city with 116,400 students. About 80% of them are people who come to Poznan to study and lead academic life. In the academic year of 2014/2015 there were over 3,500 foreigners from 90 countries among them. Foreign students come mainly from Ukraine, Spain, Belarus, Turkey, Norway, Canada and the United States. The offer of Poznan University of Medical Sciences (847 foreign students) and Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznan (735) generated the most interest among them.

For a few years in Poznan the project “Study in Poznan” has been developed, within which municipal authorities and local higher education institutions have undertaken common initiatives aimed at foreign students. This project is done by the Department of Urban Development within a broader programme “Academic and Scientific Poznan” (“Akademicki i Naukowy Poznan”), which was included in strategic documents accepted by the Municipality of Poznan, among others in the Plan of the Development Of Poznan for 2005-2010 (2005), Strategy for the Promotion of Brand Poznan (2009) and Strategy for Poznan's Development to 2030 (2013). The main aim of the “Study in Poznan” project was to strengthen competitiveness of Poznan as an academic centre in Poland and abroad. The actions included both promotional campaigns, encouraging foreigners to study in Poznan, and undertakings aiming at increasing current students' quality of life.

In recent years in Poznan there have been a few promotional activities which were to encourage students to make use of the academic offer of the city. One can mention here campaigns “Let it Happen in Poznan” (2013), “Study Poznan” (2014) and “Poznan Attracts” (2015) in which young people were encouraged to tie their future with this city. Promotional activities were run both in the media and on the education fairs and through diplomatic posts of Poland abroad. The municipal authorities started an English website (www.studyin.poznan.pl) with the educational offer of local higher education institutions. The website was fully integrated and consistent with the official internet portal of the city (www.poznan.pl) preserving the existing visual identification system. And the higher education institutions prepared a widened offer of studies in English at the BA/BSc level (1st degree) and MA/MSc (2nd degree). Open lectures of outstanding foreign scientists, artists and specialists were also an interesting solution. In 8 editions of this initiative there were about 200 lectures from various fields of science, including biotechnology, conservation, information and communication technologies, cardio-surgery, economics and management. A separate group of activities were customer care, this means activities concerning organisation of events integrating immigrant students. As the examples may serve regularly organized (since 2012) football tournament “Euroasmus and Friends” and the competition for the best blog about Poznan for foreign students. The “Ambassador of the Academic Poznan” project should be also mentioned here, where the most talented students receive special cards thanks to which they get various discounts on products and services. Ambassadors got engaged in the activities promoting Poznan as a city friendly to students among others by taking part in presentations of the city in high schools and popularising local projects aimed at students in different agglomerations.

For students studying in Poznan, the municipality of Poznan organised actions which were supposed to support young people in education and increase their quality of life in the city. The initiatives were usually in the form of scholarship programmes, business council and competitions. The examples might be “An Award of the City of Poznan for the distinguishing

Doctoral Dissertation” and “An Award of the City of Poznan for the distinguishing Master's Thesis” directed at students whose scientific research was connected with Poznan or presented solutions which could be used in the city. Students could apply for “Artistic and Scientific Award of Poznan”, financing their research projects and a scholarship for new creators and researchers. They could also make use of the offer of apprenticeships and traineeships in city institutions and local companies. Since 2003 more than 2,500 students and about 30 graduates have used this option. Moreover, for graduates of higher education institutions of Poznan a programme “A Flat for a Graduate” has been prepared to create for them an attractive offer renting a flat. On the other hand, for people interested in setting up their own business, a project “The First Step into one's own business” was started, and many fair events were organised every year. We can name here “Entrepreneurship Days of Poznan”, “Career Days in Poznan” and “Absolvent Talent Days”. During these events students could find inspiration for their own company, learn about the formal and legal side of having one's own business, find sources of financing and partners for their business. On the other hand workshops from the cycle of “Workgate: Students for Future” offered help in finding oneself on the job market, as well as trainings for job interviews, organising work in a team and methods of effective communication in a company.

At the end it is worth adding that in the examined period many Polish cities had just started to analyse the competitive surroundings and their own chances to develop on foreign education markets. Apart from “study in” projects there are also other individual initiatives of the city promotion as academic centres. In this case activities used to acquire foreign students not necessarily were an element of a planned strategy realised by municipal authorities but rather an independent decision taken by governing bodies of higher education institutions and also cultural institutions, non-governmental organisations and local companies.

5. 5. "Study in" projects in other cities

In addition to the above examples, other cities in Poland carried out "study in" projects with the goal of internationalising the higher education institutions operating in the area. These projects, like those in Warsaw, Krakow, Wroclaw and Poznan, were based on two pillars. The first was the promotion of the city's educational offer abroad, the second was the creation of friendly living conditions for foreign students in order to encourage them to stay in the city after completing their education.

Lublin's higher education offer enjoyed a growing popularity among foreign students. Based on the number of foreign students, Lublin was the third largest academic centre in Poland. In the academic year 2014/2015 nearly 4,500 citizens of other countries studied there. It was largely the result of promotional campaigns carried out since 2011 as part of the "Study in Lublin" project. For many reasons, the main recipients of these campaigns were Eastern European countries, especially the Ukraine. This was caused by geographical location, historical, linguistic and cultural commonalities, population of the country, as well as ties resulting from the post-war migration. The "Study in Lublin" project encompassed adjusting the educational offer of local universities to the needs of foreign students (e.g. new courses, classes and workshops in foreign languages), simplification of residential registration procedures, as well as providing international students with access to information and support in English, Ukrainian and Russian. An important element of the project was consisted of scholarships for students involved in science or art, for example "Municipal scholarship program of the Mayor of Lublin" and "Stefan Swiezawski scholarship program" Local

authorities have supported student's development via business incubators, and assistance in finding work experience and internships. Additionally, complementary programs were implemented, including "Lublin's soul" whose aim was to increase students' knowledge about Lublin's cultural heritage and strengthen their ties with the city.

Since 2008, "Youth in Lodz" ("Młodzi w Łodzi") project has been carried out in Lodz. The project was co-ordinated by the Investor Service and International Cooperation Bureau of the City of Lodz which, in collaboration with 5 major universities and 130 local companies, run various support programs for students. These included programs such as "Work Experience in Lodz" (paid internships during the holidays), "Your career in your hands" (free professional skills training), "Meet Employers from Lodz!" (study visits to local businesses), "I have a business idea" (funding competition for business plans for future and currently operating young entrepreneurs), "Językowzięci" ("Language-taken" – a competition for funding additional foreign language courses) and "FreeDOM for Students" (competition for having the rent for an apartment or a single room in student halls paid for the whole academic year). The project also featured a scholarship program, which included, among others, research scholarships for the most talented undergraduates and doctoral students, and funding of the student halls rent for students from outside the Lodz Voivodeship. In addition, since 2013, the city has been issuing a discount card "Youth in Lodz" valid for products and services sold by the project partners, and run an Internet internship portal (www.praktyki.lodz.pl), through which students can gain work experience in businesses operating in the city.

Local authorities and universities in Gdansk have also been promoting the city since 2014 as an academic centre of interest to international students. However, the partners of the "Study in Gdansk" project have so far focused their efforts mainly on preparation of the project objectives and the creation of promotional materials and the official website. To help foreign students settle in the city, a self-study tutorial for learning Polish "Polish for Foreigners Gdansk edition" was published, as well as a city guide in English and Russian with practical information for visitors, including transport, accommodation, catering and leisure opportunities. The City Hall run intercultural workshops at the European Solidarity Centre, as well as organised tours of Gdansk and its main tourist attractions with local guides. In addition, the universities opened information offices, which assisted foreign students not only in matters related to their studies, but also in solving everyday problems associated with housing, health care and shopping.

6. CONCLUSIONS

1. Contemporary cities more and more often are seen through the prism of higher education institutions in their area. Foreign students are a very important resource for universities and other higher education institutions. They enrich local culture, create an international academic atmosphere and, similarly to tourists, stimulate the economic growth of the city and the region. Because of that municipal authorities treat arrivals of students as an important element deciding on the condition of the urban agglomeration, influencing its image in Poland and abroad. The condition of the higher education is entered into urban and regional planning documents, where it is

emphasised that there is a need to promote the internationally recognisable brand of the city as an academic centre.

2. Promoting the city on foreign education markets is not a common activity in Poland. Actions in this field are usually the result of partner cooperation of the municipality with local higher education institutions. Together they initiate projects aiming at encouraging young foreigners to study in their city. These projects very often function under the name of “study in” and are a platform of integration of actions of various institutions at the local level. Their implementation as a result contributes to improvement of the offer of higher education institutions and strengthening the positive image of the city as a place which is modern, dynamically developing and attractive to study, live in and undertake professional activity.
3. In Poland in years 2005-2015 “study in” projects were done mainly in big urban agglomerations with the number of inhabitants of over 250,000 people. The most active actions were undertaken in academic cities where more than 50,000 people study. These were Warsaw, Krakow, Wroclaw, Poznan, Lodz, Gdansk, Lublin and Katowice. These urban agglomerations had well developed infrastructure, offered high level and quality of life and their economy had undergone the process of restructure and become more competitive. Higher education institutions functioning in their area represented various fields of science and possessed noticeable on the international scale educational and scientific potential.
4. The scope and directions of actions undertaken within the “study in” projects differed in individual cities. These initiatives can be divided into three categories. The first one included all promotional campaign to attract students from abroad. The second was concentrated on the support of foreign students who decided to come to Poland. Most frequently it took the form of helping them to do the formalities necessary to make their stay in Poland legal. The third category of activities concentrated on increasing the quality of life of students after their arrival, including facilitating their access to cultural and recreational offer of the city. Besides “study in” projects there were also accompanying programmes (scholarships, flat programmes, traineeships, free trainings and consultation points for beginning entrepreneurs etc.), whose aim was to encourage the foreigners to stay and bind their professional career with the city.
5. Projects “study in” described in the article are an example of external promotion resulting from accepting homogeneous marketing strategy for the city, region and academic centre. However, in many cities in Poland actions in this field encounter many problems resulting from inappropriate approach of the municipal authorities itself as well as higher education institutions. These were mainly connected with the inability of combining the vision of the urban agglomeration development with the ambitions of the authorities, the inability to create a good financial and organisational concept of the project or lack of agreement concerning the directions of activities which would be undertaken within promotional campaigns. The factor which needs to be constantly perfected is harmonising and integrating this cooperation around mutually accepted aims. Academic cities which can build this kind of cooperation can achieve a better synergic effect and better results on the more and more global and competitive education market.. Therefore it is important to initiate partnership projects

because higher education, besides culture and tourism, will have a key significance in the future for building clear identity of the city and strong.

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